

FINCHINGFIELD PARISH COUNCIL



The Coach House, The Village, Great Waltham, Essex. CM3 1AS

Tel: 07771964493 : email: clerk@finchingfield-pc.gov.uk Website: <https://www.finchingfield-pc.gov.uk/>

REPRESENTING FINCHINGFIELD AND CORNISH HALL END

- I. The meeting will be open to the public unless the Council directs otherwise. Members of the public are invited to address the Council during the Public Participation session.
- II. Under the 2014 Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations, the meeting will be recorded by the Clerk for the accuracy of the minutes. The recording will be destroyed once the minutes have been confirmed.

Members of the Parish Council are hereby requested to attend the Parish Council Meeting **Finchingfield Village Hall on Tuesday 24th February 2026 at 7.30 pm** for the purpose of transacting the following business: *Mark Nicholls* Clerk - Posted: 18th February 2025

AGENDA

- 032/2026 Apologies for absence**
- 033/2026 To receive members' declarations of interest and dispensations in items on the agenda**
- 034/2026 To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 27th January 2026**
- 035/2026 Public participation session.**
A maximum of 15 minutes shall be allowed for public question time, and it is requested that each member of the public speak for a maximum of 3 minutes
- 036/2026 Essex County Council report – Cllr.G.Butland**
- 037/2026 Braintree District Council report – Cllr.M.Staines**
- 038/2026 Finance**
- 1) To receive the Bank reconciliations as at 31st. January 2026
 - 2) To receive the comparison of Actual against the Budget 2025/2026
 - 3) To approve the payment of Accounts for February 2026. Also, to agree a transfer of funds to meet the Parish Council's financial requirements.
- 039/2026 Digital Workspace for Council Documents – Cllr.R.Gill**
Following a request from the Clerk to strengthen document control and audit arrangements, the Parish Council is seeking proposals for implementing a secure digital workspace to support document control, audit compliance, and good governance. Members are asked to consider how this may strengthen the Council's internal controls and support compliance with the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), including Assertion 10. **To consider** the associated annual cost (circa £50 per month for cots, whereby £30 a month is spent on printing for meetings, and those printing costs would be reduced), and **to resolve** whether to approve the implementation of a secure digital workspace and authorise the associated annual expenditure.
- 040/2026 Councillor Training and Delegated Authority – Cllr.J.Strange**
To consider and resolve that all councillor training requests shall be submitted to the Clerk in the first instance. **To further resolve** that the Clerk be granted delegated authority to approve attendance on the *New Councillors Course*, and other training appropriate to a councillor's roles and responsibilities, up to a maximum value of £100 per course, subject to the availability of budget provision. Any training request: (i) exceeding £100 per course, (ii) or to ensure that the course is appropriate to the councillor's role and responsibilities, or (iii) where the annual training budget has been exhausted, shall be referred to Full Council for determination.
- 041/2026 Review and agreement of councillors' areas of responsibility – Cllr.J.Strange**
To consider and, if thought fit, resolve that:
- a) Cllr Berry, Cllr Braithwaite, Cllr Bide, Cllr Duffin, Cllr A. Stanger, and Cllr R.Stanger will act as lead councillors for matters relating to Finchingfield.
 - b) Cllr John Strange, Cllr Lara Holliday, and Cllr Bekki Gill will act as lead councillors for matters relating to Cornish Hall End, and such allocations are for internal responsibilities
- 042/2026 ANPR Speed Camera – Location and Electricity Arrangement – Cllr.J.Strange/Cllr.A. Stanger/Cllr.D.Bide**
To receive and consider the quotation from a supplier for relocating the ANPR speed camera to the bridge and making it operational with a new power supply, as referenced under minutes 013/2026(c).
To consider which option:
- a) Alternative installation and connection costs of £500 with a supplier, with an estimated power connection date to be reported to the council

b) OR to retain the ANPR camera in its current position, and Electricity usage would be regulated by way of a formal licence, whereby the cost would be £1 a year from the ECC Estates. with an estimated power connection date to be reported to the council

Members are asked to resolve one of the following options.

043/2026

New Village Hall and Community Centre Project update - Cllr J. Strange

To receive an in-person update from the architect (George) , Neil Johnson, and John McClary regarding progress on the New Village Hall and Community Centre project. The update will include:

a) Progress on drawings currently in development

b) Any emerging considerations or design refinements

To note progress and consider any appropriate next step

044/2026

Wethersfield Airbase – any update Cllr R. Duffin

045/2026

Neighbourhood Plan responsibilities – update Cllr R. Duffin

To review the councillor responsibilities in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan.

046/2026

Toppesfield Neighbourhood plan

To consider Toppesfield's Neighbourhood Plan application and agree with the proposed wording for comment to Braintree District Council, or if any changes are required

047/2026

Planning – including any Current Planning Applications requiring a response – Planning Comments from the Parish Council

26/00305/TPOCON - The Stables Great Wincey Farm Brent Hall Road Finchingfield Essex CM7 4JZ.

Notice of Intent to carry out tree works in a conservation area:

G1-13xAcer.pseudoplatanus: reduce lower lateral spread over driveway by approximately 3-4 metres.

T1-Populus: Reduce 5 dead main stems to an approximate height of 10m

T2-Quercus robur: crown lift to an approximate height of 2 metres.

T3-Acer campestre: crown lift to an approximate height of 2 metres.

T4-Acer campestre: crown lift to an approximate height of 2 metres.

[https://publicaccess.braintree.gov.uk/online-](https://publicaccess.braintree.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=TAAGH4BFG1P00)

[applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=TAAGH4BFG1P00](https://publicaccess.braintree.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=TAAGH4BFG1P00)

26/00307/HH -24 Kempe Road, Finchingfield Essex CM7 4LE

Single-storey side and rear extension.

<https://publicaccess.braintree.gov.uk/onlineapplications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=TAAIM4BF07E00>

048/2026

Planning Decision/s made by BDC

049/2026

Appeals to Planning to Note

25/02284/FUL - Obournes Farm Upper Howe Street Finchingfield Essex CM7 4PH

Demolition of existing agricultural buildings and erection

of four detached dwellings with associated access,

parking, landscaping and biodiversity enhancements.

050/2026

Sluice Gates and Pond Management – Cllr Strange/Cllr.Bide/Cllr.Braithwaite

a) Sluice Gate Worm Drive Replacement

To note that the sluice gate worm drives are currently non-functional and present a potential flood risk to the Village Green. To note that the following councillors have indicated support in principle by email for proceeding with replacement: Cllr. Strange, Cllr. Gill, Cllr. Duffin, Cllr.A.Stanger, Cllr.R.Stanger, Cllr. Berry, Cllr.Bide, Cllr. Braithwaite

To note that Cllr Braithwaite has indicated that while not objecting to the replacement, she wishes the longer-term strategy for the pond to be reviewed. **To consider** the invoice in the sum of **£900.32 (ex VAT)** and **resolve** whether to approve payment and authorise replacement.

b) Governance and Procurement

To confirm that all invoices and quotations relating to Parish Council assets must be addressed directly to Finchingfield Parish Council.

c) Operational Management

To consider arrangements for access to the sluice gate mechanisms, including: (i)Clear operational procedures (including when and how the gates should be opened and closed) (ii) Measures to reduce the risk of future damage

d) Finchingfield Brook and Pond – Long-Term Strategy

- (1) To convene the Pond Working Group and have them report back to the council at the next meeting. To **consider** whether to: (a) Continue maintaining the existing sluice gates as an interim measure; and/or (b) Explore alternative long-term environmental and flood management solutions. (c) To consider engagement with: The Environment Agency (d) Suitably qualified engineers (e) Relevant environmental specialists
- (2) The reported existing reserves are approximately £14,000: Following the Clerk's and RFO's formal handover of the accounts on 26 March, to receive a report from the Clerk setting out the confirmed reserve position relating to the pond works, including clarification of any earmarked sums. And then to consider and determine whether the Council wishes to make any resolutions regarding the allocation or reallocation of those funds.
- (3) To **consider** working in alignment with a Neighbourhood Priority Statement and existing policy framework (or to formalise a process) whereby the pond working party might collate previous information, and then consider appropriate consultation and evidence-gathering steps before any long-term decision is taken. (points 239/2025 & 022/2026)

- 051/2026. Finchingfield Windmill – Proposed Transfer to a Community Interest Company update – Cllr.J.Strange**
To discuss Essex County Council's proposed transfer of the Windmill asset to a Community Interest Company and consider any required next steps, including whether to support the proposal in principle and agree further actions. **There will be guest speakers**, including Essex CC, representing the Windmill for this item.
- 052/2026 MACAR Homes – Land Behind Freshwell Health Centre - Cllr J. Strange**
To receive an update on the planning application with Braintree District Council and consider whether any further action or representation is required.
- 053/2026 May Day Fête – 4 May 2026 - Cllr J. Strange**
To discuss a proposed May Day Fête to be held on Monday, 4 May 2026, including the use of a Maypole and the provision of stalls, and to consider whether the proposal and the creation of a working party should be developed and if they should consider any opportunities with the planned tractor rally of the 10th May
- 054/2026 To consider the annual Library Honorarium - Cllr J. Strange**
To propose and approve payment by the end of the financial year, the sum of £650 as a contribution towards the continued operation of the local library.
- 055/2026 Finchingfield Pump track – Cllr.R.Gill**
To receive an update on the responses received following the recent call for comments and questions. Members to:
- Note the content of submissions received.
 - Consider any themes or matters arising.
- 056/2026 Matters deferred to March**
(a) Dedicated Digital Recording Device for Meetings – Cllr.D.Bide
To receive an update from Cllr Bide on the investigation into suitable dedicated digital audio recording devices to support accurate minute-taking and good governance, including indicative options and costs at the request of the Clerk. To consider the options and whether the Council wishes to proceed with the purchase
- 057/2026 Date of next Full Council meeting – 24th March 2026 at Cornish Hall End Village Hall at 7.30 pm**
24.03: 28.04 Annual Parish Assembly: 26.05 FPC AGM: 23.06: 28.07: 22.09: 27.10: 24.11.26
- 058/2026 Correspondence**
To note, correspondence was received, and responses were sent by the Clerk since the last meeting
- 059/2026 Exclusion of the Public and Press**
Councillors to Resolve that by virtue of the provisions of Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded during discussion of the following business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.
- 060/2026 Trust matters**
a) **Discuss and resolve** which CIO option should be pursued, versus the current charity trust arrangements and provide an update on the Trust CIO project with RCCE.
a) **To propose and agree** the engagement of specialist accountants Lambert Chapman, to arrange and administer the Gift Aid and VAT affairs connected to the new village hall and community centres
- 061/2026 Closure of the meeting**
a) To close the meeting, having considered and determined all items of business.